

THE BIBLE FRAUD

The Church made the "Krist" concept its own, suppressing the fact that it is common to older religious traditions including the Essene, the Egyptian and the Indian.

Part 3 of 3

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The Bible Fraud

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THE ANOINTED LEADER OF THE ESSENES: Just Who Were the Essenes?

In an attempt to clarify the story of the Judas and Jesus twins, a link must be made between narratives in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Gospels of the New Testament. In the presentation of this evidence, *The Bible Fraud* confines its hypothesis to a framework of known historical documents and the probabilities and possibilities of information contained in them. The adopted and general ancient beliefs are the chief sources and have been applied to the broad facts of what is currently accepted, and the minor day-to-day details are a lesser consideration.

What must be remembered is that, in correlating this evidence, Gospel information is the primary source on Judas and Jesus, but once "the true name of Jesus Christ" is known, other documentation can be accessed. Much of the Gospel material shall be shown to be riddled with uncertainty, but some narratives contain elements of a well-known tradition.

The Dead Sea Scrolls make no mention of Jesus Christ or the early Christian Church. At the time of their discovery, the Professor of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Dr Yigal Yadin, said the omission was "strange". It has long been known there is information in the Dead Sea Scrolls that is damning to Christian beliefs, and the Church's high-level involvement with interpreting the Scrolls fostered a grave element of suspicion. Since the Scrolls were found some six decades ago, close associates of the Vatican were placed in dominant positions in every phase of the investigation and translation of the Scrolls. The priests regulated the flow of information and controlled its release. Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh discovered during research for their work *The Dead Sea Scroll Deception* (Corgi, 1992) just "how fiercely the world of orthodox biblical scholarship was prepared to fight to retain its monopoly of available information". J. Edgar Hoover, of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), summed up the Church attitude when he once said, "it can be held certain that information that is withheld or suppressed contains truths that are detrimental to the persons involved in the suppression".

To provide conclusions on the lives of Judas and Jesus ben Panthera, the highly regarded and comprehensive work of Professor Robert Eisenman⁹¹ was drawn upon. Professor Eisenman has devoted his life to the specific study of Palestinian history and has analysed and lectured extensively upon the Dead Sea Scrolls and various aspects of Christian origins at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. It was Professor Eisenman who provided the now-accepted and spectacular connection between the Dead Sea Scrolls and James, the Gospel brother of Judas and Jesus. This connection established that crucial information had been painstakingly concealed from the public by a small enclave of Catholic priests who controlled the release of the material. Unlike a number of personalities in the New Testament, James was an historical person—one who played a more prominent role in the affairs of his time than is generally acknowledged.

At the time of the lives of the ben Panthera twins, the now-called Essenes were one of three religious sects in the Roman provinces, the other two being the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Sadducees were a Jewish sect of the time, opposed to the Pharisees. They denied the resurrection of the dead and the validity of oral tradition.⁹² Old records say that Pharez, who developed a School of Predestination, founded the Pharisees. It seems that the Sadducees were founded by Sadoc, a disciple of Antigonus Scohaeus, the person said to have been associated with the development of an institute called the School of Infidels. Sadducees are mentioned fourteen times in the New Testament; the Pharisees ninety-eight times, mostly in the Gospels. The weight of scholarship heavily supports the argument that the Dead Sea Scrolls found in the caves at Qumran were produced by the

Essenes, although this is debated by Christian apologists. It is possible that these writings were compiled (or stored) in various settlements and moved to the Dead Sea caves from other areas for protection and preservation. It is not improbable to suggest the manuscripts were deposited in the Dead Sea area as late as 132 by the Jewish leader Simeon bar Cochba, but the general opinion is that the oldest and largest of the three separate discoveries was hidden for safekeeping when the destruction of the Qumran settlement seemed imminent sometime shortly before the beginning of the Jewish War in AD 66.

Nowhere in the Dead Sea Scrolls collection is the term "Essene" found. The Qumran community never referred to themselves as "Essenes", but they did use a number of other Aramaic terms. From these terms, it is clear the Community did not have a single definite name for themselves, although the term "Ebronites" ("Ebionites" in some translations) was used within the later-dated scroll discoveries.⁹³ These particular writings were found in the ruins of a Byzantine monastery further up the hills from the oldest and largest collection of Qumran. In academic circles, it is generally believed that a high priest of the early Essene community wrote the Book of Enoch in order to fulfill an Old Testament "prophecy" in Jeremiah (31:31-34): "...the days are coming when I [the Lord] will make a New Covenant". The authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls constantly referred to a New Covenant and regularly called themselves the "Keepers of the New Covenant" and the "Community of the New Covenant".

The first-century classical writers Josephus, Philo and Pliny indicated that in their time these people were known as the "Essenoi" or "Essaioi" in Greek, but a variety of opinion exists among scholars and researchers as to the origin of the name. Some explain the Greek name for Essenes as meaning "Silent Ones" and others as signifying "Healers". Some assert the term means "Pious", while others call them "Seers", "Performers of the Law", "Retired Ones", "Stout Ones", "Mysterious Ones", "Daily Baptists" or "Apron-Wearers". In the latter respect, echoes of the Essene beliefs can be found in the rituals of the Masons. Josephus recorded that they "don a white apron" before their ceremonies, after which they "then take off their white aprons, which they consider sacred clothes".

The writings of the early Church extend another opinion about the identity of the body of monks now called the Essenes. St Epiphanius of Salamis (315-403) left behind some extraordinary records about Jesus, Mary and the Gospel stories. The modern-day Church has claimed that these records "exhibit a marvellous mixture of valuable traditions", but many of those ancient traditions oppose the canonical writings of today. Lipsius, in his article⁹⁴ on this interesting early churchman, said he was:

...honest, but credulous, a narrow-minded zealot for Church orthodoxy... His frequent journeys and exhaustive readings enabled him to collect a large but ill-arranged store of historical information, and this he used with much ingenuity in defending the Church orthodoxy of his time and opposing

every kind of heresy... The accounts he gives of the Jewish, Christian and Gnostic sects...exhibit a marvellous mixture of valuable traditions...and [he] collects a rich abundance of genuine traditions from what seemed a worthless mass.

Some of his "genuine traditions" are recorded throughout this book. When St Epiphanius wrote of allegedly "heretical" sects once existing in occupied Roman territories, he called them the "Men of Yesu". The term "Yesu" was taught in Druidism as one of the three aspects of the Druidic trinity, the other two being Beli and Taran. St Epiphanius went on to say the Men of Yesu were sometimes called "Yesseans", after Jesus of the Gospels. Epiphanius sought to justify this startling connection with the Yesseans and Jesus by asserting that in Hebrew the name "Jesus" means "physician", and the Men of Yesu were highly regarded herbal healers supporting the same doctrines as those applied to Jesus in the New Testament. The assertion that Jesus and the Men of Yesu were in some way connected was a documented Church fact during the very earliest years of recorded Christian history.

The historian Josephus believed that the Essenes were formed shortly after the Maccabean period (168 BC) by an exiled High Priest named Mattathias, the father of the military king Judas Maccabaeus.⁹⁵ A very obscure tradition held that Mattathias, in search of truth and true righteousness, travelled to India and, having studied there for many years, returned to his brethren and founded the first body of monks. In Dead Sea Scrolls tradition, this man was afterwards called by his disciples "the Master" or, in some translations, "the Orthodox Teacher". He was never portrayed as a divinity, so he cannot in any way be equated with the Gospel Jesus, as some recent authors have tried to do. In fact, it is said in one of the Dead Sea

Scrolls (Zadokite) that he was "gathered in"—an expression used in the Old Testament to describe natural death.

Essenes Linked with the Druids

Some modern researchers give the Essenes a much earlier origin and again connect them with the Druids of Gaul, circa 250 BC. Druidism was a mystical profession, and in the earliest of times mystery and magic were always confounded. The association between the Essenes and the Druids developed from the similarities between the two groups, which both formed a class apart and kept the people who were culturally inferior to them in subjection.

Both the Essenic and Druidic high priests were regarded as the most just of men, of a priestly class with secret writings, sacred songs, special clothing, strict rules of divination, hidden instruction and a human skull displayed in certain initiatory ceremonies. Both fraternities taught esoterically the existence of a Supreme Being, a future state of rewards and punishment and immortality of the soul. It was not lawful to commit their doctrines to writing, and "secret ciphers" were used to conceal their innermost mysteries.⁹⁶ Julius Caesar (d. 44 BC), who came into contact with the

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Druids, was probably the oldest authority on the mysterious ways of the Gaulish clergy.⁹⁷

The remarkable coincidence between the chief features of the Druidic and Essenic fraternities can be accounted for only by referring them to the same origin. The truth appears to be that the Druids and Essenes derived their similarity from the spirit of brotherhood which had prevailed in all ages of the civilised world. The inherent principles they adopted seem to be that all members were engaged in the same pursuit and assented to the similar religious creed, that being a belief in life after death, and it was their secrecy in that knowledge that gave them their exclusiveness.

Archival records indicate that the Essenes may have been of very early origin. Theophilus Gale, who wrote a work called *The Court of the Gentiles*,⁹⁸ said:

Now the origination or rise of these Essenes I conceive by the best conjectures I can make from antiquity to be in or immediately after the Babylonian captivity [circa 397 BC], though some make them later.

John Yarker, author of the book *The Arcane Schools*,⁹⁹ linked the common ancient brotherhoods together and also associated the Essenes with the ending of the Babylonian exile.

It is possible...that Chaldean, whence Culdeean, was as appropriate to the Druids as to the Babylonians, and that as the Essenes were Babylonians, the Culdees were Essenes, as held by Bede [English Church historian, 673–735], and thus the Essenes were Culdees and the Culdees were Druids.

With what was known about the Essenes, any of the names given to them could be successfully applied. The oldest research papers variously called them "Therapeutes", "Ascetics", "Monks" or "Ecclesiastics", which are but different names for one and the selfsame sect.

The best-qualified researchers explain that the word "Essene" is nothing more than the Egyptian word for the Greek Therapeute, signifying the character of the ascetic sect of ecclesiastic monks as professing to the practice of healing.¹⁰⁰ The "ascetic" aspect of their existence indicates severe discipline, long fasting and the willingness of many of them to become eunuchs. The name "monks" indicates their contemplative life and their abstraction from the world. "Ecclesiastics" is of the same sense and indicates their being called out, elected and set apart to the more immediate services and honour of God.

They had a flourishing university, or corporate body, established on these principles, at Alexandria in Egypt, long before the period assigned for the birth of Jesus Christ. From this body they sent out missionaries, and had established colonies, auxiliary branches and affiliated communities in various cities of Asia Minor, which colonies were in a flourishing condition before the preaching of Paul. They also resided in monasteries on the lake of Parabolé [or Maria], also in Egypt.¹⁰¹

The fourth-century writings of the Church confirm that the Essenes abounded in Egypt, especially around Alexandria.¹⁰² Their missionaries established stations or colonies in Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Phillippi, Colosse and Thessalonica. At Ephesus

they had a well-established College of Essenes.¹⁰³ They also established and maintained at least one settlement in the Qumran area by the Dead Sea, and others in Jerusalem, Antioch, Bethlehem, Damascus and Mount Carmel. They gained their recruits in two ways: they adopted children and reared them into the way of the principles and practices of their Order,¹⁰⁴ and they took in people in trouble or homeless, wandering ascetics. They were generally celibates, although Josephus indicated that the Essenes were quite divided within themselves, and there was one particular sect that accepted a kind of marriage between men and women.

The central aspect of Essenic literature is its pre-occupation with prophecy, and it is recorded that they had an uncanny ability to successfully predict future events. Philo compared them not only with the Persian Magi but also with the Indian Yogis. Later researchers also connected the Druids with "the Magi of the old Persians".¹⁰⁵

The etymology of the word "Essenoi" or "Essaioi" has not been settled. In the 16th century, the name "Essene" was generally applied retrospectively to every ascetic religious sect living throughout Europe during the last two centuries BC and the first century or so of the Christian era. Among the contending opinions today, the preferable title seems still to be "Essenes"—and, to

avoid confusion, that name has been adopted for this work. In using this title, however, it should be remembered that the early church called them the "Men of Yesu", and the origin of that title shall become clear in later chapters.

The Special Name of John the Baptist

The Dead Sea is the saltiest body of water in the world and is located at the mouth of the River Jordan, the place where John the Baptist, according to the Gospels, baptised Jesus. The

Gospels also record that John the Baptist's mother, Elizabeth, was the sister of Jesus' mother, Mariamne Herod.¹⁰⁶ This reference makes John the Baptist the cousin of Jesus and thus Judas, and the Gospels say he was six months older than the twins. Aunt Elizabeth was married to a priest, and this has been interpreted in some quarters as giving John the Baptist and his family Sadducee (far-right) connections.

The constant references in the Dead Sea Scrolls to a "New Covenant" are directly linked to the New Testament letters (today called "epistles") that are attributed by the Church to the disciple Paul. The Bible, however, records that there were many authors associated with the epistles (they are named in a later chapter). The two authors of the Second Letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 3:6) state that they were "ministers of a New Covenant", which connected them with the "Keepers of the New Covenant" or the "Community of the New Covenant". In other words, they were members of one of the various Essene communities of the time.

The "New Covenant" basically entailed a belief in certain of the Essene Master's religious writings and included a formal oath of obedience totally and eternally to the Law of Moses.¹⁰⁷ As part of this understanding, candidates for Essene leadership had to pass through a strenuous training program for three years before being granted permission for entry into the higher ranks. "The ceremonies were numerous, the physical proofs painful, and the mental trials appalling."¹⁰⁸ The Essene elders would then impart

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special secret teachings, special titles and knowledge given under strict vows of secrecy. Josephus recorded that the Essenes "considered it a grave sin to reveal their secret knowledge to outsiders, with death preferable by comparison".

To further establish that much of what the New Testament contains is directly related to the doctrines of the Essenes, Paul, for example, mentioned his Essene community in Hebrews (8:7), where he said, "For if that first Covenant had been faultless, there would be no occasion for a second". This narrative indicates that new religious documents had been written. Paul also quoted from the Old Testament Book of Jeremiah (31:31-34), relating to the "prophecy" of the creation of a "New Covenant". From this and other New Testament verses, it can be ascertained that the now-called Christian authors were firm supporters of the Essene New Covenant idea, and this can be confirmed in many other places throughout the writings attributed to Paul.¹⁰⁹ The Church agreed, for the introductory page of the Revised Standard Version of the King James Bible (1971) describes the Christian writings of today as "The New Covenant, commonly called the New Testament".

The publication and subsequent interpretation of most of the Dead Sea Scrolls has established direct and close relationships between the sect of the Scrolls, the Epistles and the entire substance of the Gospels.

A close study of those documents has resulted in a growing consensus that Judas and Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, was also directly associated with the sect of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Gospels say that John was of priestly stock and lived in the Judean wilderness facing the Dead Sea "until the day of his manifestation" (Luke 1:80). From this Gospel information, John the Baptist is now generally recognised, like Paul, as an Essene. Dr Franz Hartmann added further information, saying in his book *The Life of Jehoshua*¹¹⁰ that John the Baptist "was of a noble family and had many influential friends". The discovery in 1929 by Hugh J. Schonfield of the lost *Book of the Nativity of John* (the Baptist) revealed that originally:

*John the Baptist [as a baby] was considered by the early Church as the infant messiah. Its loss [of this document] at a very early date is not to be wondered at, as the Church had the best possible reasons for suppressing it. The fact that John the Baptist was regarded as the messiah by a numerous following may be a new one to many people.*¹¹¹

Schonfield then set out a chapter outlining the features of the Baptist's messianic mission and traced the fortunes of the sect which accepted him as their leader. The Dead Sea Scrolls record that the "Community of the New Covenant" possessed a hierarchy, an inner circle of initiated members, and their leader was known as "the anointed one". The practice of greasing or smearing with oil is supposed by many to be an exclusive Christian ceremony, but was actually in vogue in pre-Christian oriental nations. A statement in the *New American Cyclopaedia*¹¹² confirms that:

...anointing with perfumed oil was in common use among the Greeks and the Romans as a mark of hospitality to guests. Anointing was an ancient custom throughout the East, by pouring aromatic oils on persons as a token of honor ... it

was also employed in consecrating priests, prophets and kings, and the places and instruments appointed for worship.

Obelisks, images and statues had long been consecrated by the devotees of the earlier oriental systems. The Old Testament records the anointing of ten stones set up by Joshua, and also the stone upon which Jacob slept at the time of his vision. Aaron, Saul, David and Solomon were anointed with oil in the same way as the sick were anointed on the Sabbath.¹¹³ It would seem that in ancient Palestinian tradition, kings, political and military chiefs, village heads and, in fact, any claimants to high office were anointed and hence called "anointed ones", leaders or messiahs in the true sense of the word. Interestingly enough, some leaders and village heads, after anointing, were then called "lord" (as in "landlord" or "lord mayor").

Origen (185-251), one of the shining lights of the early Church, said on the matter, "There are some who said of John [the Baptist] that he was anointed".¹¹⁴ St Epiphanius also said John the Baptist

was "one of the anointed", confirming there was more than just one "anointed" man in the Gospel story. Roman Emperor Julian (361-363), in his book *The Arguments of the Emperor Julian*, supported the opinion and introduced an extraordinary word by stating:

At any rate, neither Paul nor Matthew nor Mark dared to say that Jesus is God, but only the Krist John, they ventured to assert this.

The "Krist" Figures

The Krist John... Origen, Epiphanius and Julian the Emperor all clearly recorded that John the Baptist, the

cousin of Judas and Jesus, was a "Krist" figure, but made no reference to Jesus himself attaining that status. Bishop Theodoret, writing in the fifth century, provided further confirmation that Jesus was not one of the "Krist" personalities, although many others of his time were.¹¹⁵

But what was a "Krist" figure? The word "Krist" seems to have had its origin in ancient Egypt and was the name of a highly regarded early god. This ancient name was found extensively inscribed into the Palermo Stone, the largest and best preserved of six basalt stones uncovered in Egypt. The ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions helped archaeologists to date the early pharaohs up to the Fifth Dynasty. These original Egyptian records were carved into tablets of stone and deposited in the tomb of a pharaoh more than one thousand years before the New Testament was written. In these old records, now in the Palermo Museum, Horus, the Egyptian god of Light, was called "Krist" or "Krst". His mother was the goddess Isis, who conceived him as a virgin.

"Krist", according to St Epiphanius,¹¹⁶ was the spiritual Self in each and every living person. This explains why Epiphanius was baffled when he said he could find no writings to confirm his own later orthodox views concerning "Jesus Christ" as an actual living person. He was naturally puzzled at the unhistorical nature of his Christian god. Bishop Epiphanius added to the concept of the Krist figures. He frankly recorded that Alexander of 100 BC was "one of the anointed"¹¹⁷—a statement which clearly establishes a long history of Krist figures preceding the canonical date of Judas and Jesus. In fact, the "anointed" or Krist figures actually preceded the writing of the Old Testament in the story of Krishna. The

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Old Testament priest and author Ezra subsequently made references to anointing (c. 397 BC), providing two separate examples in just one narrative.¹¹⁸

Many of the Essene manuscripts refer to "Kristo", "Krst" or "Krist", a divine internal figure in Essenic minds and set forth primarily in the Book of Enoch as "One eternal with God". The Book of Enoch was written some time around 150–120 BC.¹¹⁹ Krist was also established in the doctrine of the Gnostics, who held Kristo to be the personal and immortal Spirit of man. The son of Poseidon and Meduse was called "Khryst" and the priests of Apollo were known as "Khyrstes". In fact, the word "Kristo", or its derivations "Krst", "Krist", "Kristo", "Khyrst" and "Kriشنا", appears in every ancient religious system and shows that the original Kristo was believed to be the personal and invisible mediator and guide between God and everything spiritual in man. The Krist concept has been an ancient religious tradition continually suppressed by the Catholic Church through the centuries.¹²⁰

Many Anointed Ones

In a document called *Dialogue with Trypho*, written by St Justin Martyr some time around 160, Trypho, a Jewish gentleman, claimed that the Church "invented a Kristo". Trypho was intimating that a Kristo-type figure similar in concept to the Hindu Krishna was purposely devised by Justin Martyr and his associates. Trypho's comments, around 130 years after the canonical date of the death of Jesus Christ, clearly show that the Jesus Christ promoted today was actually "unknown" among the general populace, but the Krist concept from the Book of Enoch and Kristo, the Hindu name of the Sun, were.

Adding further depth to the story, Trypho, again in the writings of Justin Martyr, said the word "Krist" was really a substitute for a very ancient divine name, and its power was known to the "Elect" alone of the fully initiated Rabbis. In other words, the most advanced Rabbis were initiates of secret knowledge and knew the substance of an ancient mystery.

Both Judas and Jesus said on several occasions in the canonical Gospels and on more occasions in the apocryphal Gospels, particularly the Gospel of Thomas, that they knew the "secret of the Kingdom of God". Jesus later learnt the ultimate secret in Egypt, which exceeded the secrets of the Lesser Mysteries of the anointed Essenes. That great secret, as an inner circle of Rabbis know today, is still preserved in the Bible.

The Gospels do not record the anointing of Krist John, the Baptist, but they do record the anointing of Jesus.¹²¹ Judas was also anointed, probably before Jesus, because he was the "first-born son" (Luke 2:7). Simon Peter called Judas "a Krist", whereupon Judas commanded his followers to "tell no man that secret thing".¹²²

Though it is now impossible from the imperfect record to ascertain the exact state of the earliest Christian texts, the salient fact dwelt upon by the Church today is that Jesus was the *only* person anointed in the Gospels and therefore, in their opinion, that made him *the* messiah—not just one of many, as there were.

Rabbi Jesus Elected to be Anointed

Christian tradition has preserved the "good principle" of the Krist as the ideal of all their aspirations, and this is apparent in the writings of the early presbyters. Hippolytus (d. 236), for example, said the sect of Ebronites/Ebionites felt Jesus had been justified by his perfected practice of the Law of Moses.¹²³ In other words, he had excelled in the preaching of the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament, and had qualified as a Rabbi.

Amazingly, St Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, put the following argument into the mouth of his learned Jewish opponent:

Those who affirm him [Jesus] to have been a man, and to have been anointed by election, and then to have become a Krist [anointed], appear to me to speak more plausibly than you... [Trypho responding to Justin Martyr].¹²⁴

Summarised, Justin Martyr, who maintained the virgin birth dogma, had in the previous chapter of his *Dialogue with Trypho* actually confessed:

...even if I cannot demonstrate so much of this [namely, evidence that Jesus was God incarnate in a virgin's womb], you will at least admit that Jesus is the anointed of God; in any case, he can be shown to have been born as a man of a man, and proved to be raised by election to the dignity of messiahship [anointed]. For there are some of our persuasion [early presbyters] who think that he is a messiah but declare him to have been a man of a man.

St Justin again referred to "anointed by election", but what exactly was "election"?

The academic opinion was that certain persons who had been initiated into the Lesser Mysteries were elected by a body of priests to be anointed, and

then called Kristos. This was an established "Essene tradition"¹²⁵ and the "election" was consummated at "baptism" which, in Rabbi Jesus' case, was "at about the age of thirty years". This highly valued ancient religious Krist tradition had been relentlessly crushed by the Catholic Church as heresy throughout the centuries.¹²⁶

The early Christian presbyters thought of and used the term "Krist" with a significance at considerable variance with that of the later Nicene belief, which actually personified this long and mysterious Krist concept going back as far as Horus.

The "Star" Figure

A key factor in determining the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls in relation to the ben Panther twins relates to the leader of the "Community of the New Covenant". *The Bible Fraud* proposes that John the Baptist, being Krist, the anointed one, was the messianic leader of the Essenes. As such, he would have been called "the Star". In old writings available, four anointed leaders (messiahs) are recorded in association with the Essene community. In this regard, Josephus said some Essenes were "involuntarily anointed".

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Of extreme interest is the knowledge that a phial of oil was found in the Qumran caves with the Dead Sea Scrolls. It was wrapped and sealed in a protective manner, indicating it was very precious to those who preserved it. One could be excused for thinking it was safely stored for the anointing of their future Krist/messiahs.

One of the Dead Sea Scrolls, called "The Book of the Community Rule", outlines the instructions for specific use of the Star, the head of the Order. It states that he shall:

...admit into the Covenant of grace all those who have freely devoted themselves to the observance of God's precepts, that they may be joined to the Council of God. He will cleanse him of all wicked deeds with the spirit of holiness, like purifying waters he will shed upon him the spirit of truth, and when his flesh is sprinkled with water, it shall be made clean by the humble submission of his soul to all the precepts of God.

This verse shows that the head of the Essene community had the authority to admit new general members into the Order after baptising them. Baptism was most certainly not part of the orthodox Jewish tradition, so John the Baptist was at some time the head of the Order. Most likely he had been a leader excelling in his position and surpassed the other members by being proclaimed a prophet by a large number of people. He was declared to be "more than a prophet" by Rabbi Jesus (Matt. 11:9).

"Star of Bethlehem" Mystery Solved

Nothing was recorded about the earlier life of Judas or Rabbi Jesus in the Essene community.¹²⁷ Being anointed seemed to indicate both Judas and Rabbi Jesus had previously undergone the required three years of strenuous training required for entry into the hierarchy of the Essene Order, and anointing was their "token of honour"¹²⁸ before full admission into the "inner circle of initiates". That both Judas and Rabbi Jesus knew certain "secrets" was made manifest from the Gospel of Mark,¹²⁹ and they knew too much of the secret rituals of the Essenes to have been outsiders.

The Gospels narrate that as a result of John the Baptist's fanatical dedication to the Law of Moses, his career came to a sudden and dramatic end when he was supposedly beheaded for condemning the marriage of Herod Agrippa I to his sister-in-law and niece, Herodias—because "it is against the Law [The Law of Moses] for you to have your brother's wife" (Mark 6:18). "There is no historical foundation" to the beheading of John the Baptist and the story "has been doubted",¹³⁰ but it seems certain that he was executed by the Romans.

By way of comment, the execution of John the Baptist was not carried out under Herod the Great. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great (who went to live in Gaul in AD 39) married Herodias, the wife of his half-brother Herod, who was the other son of Herod the Great. Herod Antipas was the Tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea¹³¹ and styled himself as "friend of the Romans". It was Herod Antipas who ordered the death of John the Baptist.¹³²

After the death of John the Baptist, Judas inherited the leadership of the Essenes because of family bloodline and the status of the tradition of the first born. Because he was now Judas the "anointed" initiate, he was called "Judas the Krist" (or "Krist Judas"), which developed to "Judas Khrestus" in subsequent Latin translations. He became the Star, the head of the Essenes at their Bethlehem community—the town in which, two of the Gospels later recorded, he and his twin brother Rabbi Jesus were born.¹³³

As Professor Eisenman has stressed, this documentation linking the messiah figure with the word "Star" occurs elsewhere in the Dead Sea Scrolls and is of crucial importance. Significantly, the Star reference has been cited by sources independent of both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament, including historians and chroniclers of first-century Rome such as Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius. According to Josephus, the arrival of a "Star" character was a major factor in the revolt of AD 66.

Some 220 years or more after the Church claimed that Jesus Christ died for our sins, the "Star of Bethlehem" found its way into the second Gospel to be written, that of Matthew (Matt. 2:2). Here it was retrospectively made to herald the arrival of a

messiah, "a governor who shall rule the people" (Matt. 2:6), and was presented in the usual glamorised fashion of the early presbyters' writings. Just as important was the presence of Simeon bar Cochba and his troops in the Qumran area between AD 132 and 136. Simeon bar Cochba, a Jewish army leader, claimed to be and was accepted as a very popular messiah.¹³⁴ Even more remarkable is that bar Cochba means "son of a Star" in Aramaic¹³⁵ and is the name commonly used to describe him.

Simeon bar Cochba was just another in the succession of the many Jewish messiahs who had come and gone, but only those people who study Jewish history knew anything of them. That some of bar Cochba's own documents were found in the Qumran caves clearly suggests he was himself an Essene leader. It would be very interesting to know who Simeon bar Cochba's father and grandfather were, for it appears obvious the "Star" figures were all successive (related) members of one family.

Two Messiahs Expected

"The Book of the Community Rule" from the Dead Sea Scrolls collection introduced the Essene belief that they lived in expectation of two important

messiahs. This was strikingly similar to the two messiahs recorded in the Acts of Thomas. One would be of the priestly caste, and the other would be a warrior who would restore the kingdom of his people, a military commander. With the birth of the "royal" ben Panthera twins and their education in the Essene community, it was highly probable they were regarded as the two anticipated messiahs.

In the context of the tradition of the time, "messiah" did not signify what it later and incorrectly came to signify in Christian preaching. It simply meant a leader, "an anointed one", and, in Essenic belief, one who was expected to deliver them from Roman bondage.

"The Book of the Community Rule" from the Dead Sea Scrolls collection introduced the Essene belief that they lived in expectation of two important messiahs.

The Essenes were not the only community to believe in the coming of special leaders. Du Perron, in his *Life of Zoroaster*, gave an account of certain prophecies to be found in the sacred books of the Persians. One was to the effect that at successive periods of time there would appear on Earth certain "sons of Zoroaster" who would "redeem mankind". Among the Greeks, the same prophecy was found. The Oracle of Delphi was the depository, according to Plato, of an ancient and secret prophecy of the birth of a "son of Apollo" who was to restore and reign justice on Earth.¹³⁶

Among the Essene community's then-secret doctrines was the belief that one of their messiahs would eventually lead them to victory over their Roman oppressors. This was to be the first born, Judas Khrestus, and the Essene hierarchy acclaimed him as the restorer of the Kingdom of God. One section of one of the Dead Sea Scrolls was written in readiness for the blessing to be extended before the (hopefully) successful outcome of the radical events expected to happen when their oppressors were challenged. This outline is carried in a scroll called "The Messianic Rule":

When they shall gather for the common table, the priest shall bless the first fruits of bread and wine; thereafter the messiah of Israel shall extend his hand over the bread, and all the congregation of the community shall utter a blessing.

This is the blueprint of the Last Supper found recorded in the New Testament, and it establishes that Judas Khrestus was the messianic leader of the Essenes. The New Testament records in several places that he raised the "cup of the New Covenant" in true Essenic fashion.¹³⁷ The word "New" has now been dropped from modern Bibles, but appears in all ancient Bibles.

From Old Testament times, Jewish meals included a blessing over bread and wine (Gen. 14:18) and over the centuries assumed special importance, as can be seen in many sections of the Dead

Sea Scrolls. Josephus said of the Essenes, "They consider it a grave sin to rest or touch food before praying".

The Old Testament changeover from simply reciting a short prayer over the bread and wine (Grace) into the symbolic ritual of eating the body and drinking the blood of a god had a long, previous history and came to be introduced "officially" into Christian practice during the latter part of the fourth century.

About the Author:

Tony Bushby, an Australian, became a highly successful businessman and entrepreneur very early in his life. He established a magazine publishing business and spent 20 years researching, writing and publishing his own magazines, primarily for the Australian and New Zealand markets.

With strong spiritual beliefs and an interest in metaphysical subjects, Tony has developed long relationships with many associations and societies throughout the world. He has been given access to rare biblical manuscripts in the archives of numerous private libraries and museums. *The Bible Fraud* involved him in 12 years of full-time, painstaking research at great personal expense. His extensive travels have taken him to Egypt, the Middle East, England, Wales, Scotland, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Australia, New Zealand and the USA. He is currently abroad, preparing further manuscripts to follow *The Bible Fraud*.

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Continued on page 82

Endnotes

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102. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, lib. 2, ch. xvii.
103. Higgins, *ibid.*
104. Damascus Document, Dead Sea Scrolls.
105. Mackey, *ibid.*
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116. Epiphanius, *Heresies*, liii, 1.
117. *ibid.*, xxix, 3.
118. 1 Kings 19:16. Also 1 Kings 1-53.
119. *Lakeland Bible Dictionary*, Zondervan Publishing House, 1966.
120. Professor Hilton Hotema, historian and author.
121. Mark 14:3, Matt. 26:7.
122. Luke 4:41, Sinai Bible.
123. Hippolytus, *Philosophy*, vii, p. 34.
124. *ibid.*, p. xlix.
125. *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, vol. V, 1909, p. 547.
126. For examples, see: Conybeare, F.C., *The Key of Truth: A Manual of the Pauline Church of Armenia*, Oxford, 1898, available in the British Library.
127. The Luke 2:42 reference to Jesus being in the temple when he was 12 years old is a forgery; *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, vol. IX, 1 October 1910, p. 425.
128. *New American Cyclopaedia*, vol. I, p. 620.
129. Mark 4:11, 4:33-34.
130. *Encyclopaedia Judaica Jerusalem*, vol. 8, 1971, p. 388.
131. See Matt. 14:1, Luke 3:1, 3:19, Mark 6:4.
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136. Plato in *Apology, Anacalypsis*, ii, p. 189.
137. Mark 14:22-24, Matt. 26:28, 1 Cor. 11:25.

Continued from page 45

Clarification on Mention of Mary in the Koran (Al-Qur'an)

Dear Duncan: With respect to your query and your readers' comments concerning the Koran's mention of Mary—as given in part 1 of Tony Bushby's "The Bible Fraud" in NEXUS 9/01 (page 30 in his book)—I'll endeavour to clarify the matter as best I can.

Bushby relates: "The story of Mary's pregnancy by a Roman soldier also appears in the sacred book of the Moslems, the Koran. It states that 'a full-grown man' forced his attentions on Mary, and in her fear of the disgrace that would follow she left the area and bore Jesus in secret."

The event being dealt with here is the episode generally known to Christians as the Annunciation, when Gabriel, the angel of the Lord, announced (annunciated) that Mary would bear a son.

Difficulties are, of course, always encountered when translating one language into another—and especially so with religious texts where scriptural connotations are of the utmost importance.

There are, to my knowledge, some 29 English translations of Al-Qur'an currently in print, and they each vary to lesser or greater degrees.

Clearly, the best translations are by

Muslims, while those by Christians and others are to be avoided.

The most inaccurate appears to be a translation by N. J. Dawood which, although readily available in most bookstores, is publicised as being "an updated translation"—a description which generally means "interpreted" rather than accurate. (Dawood, a mythologist, is actually better known for his fantasy writings about Aladdin, Sinbad, etc.)

I mention the Dawood volume in particular because this appears (as far as I can see) to be the one used by Tony Bushby for the Annunciation sequence. This is a little odd because *The Bible Fraud's* bibliography specifically cites a translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, whose text is quite different in this regard.

Although Bushby quotes that "a full-grown man' forced his attentions on Mary", what the Dawood translation actually says is: "We sent to her Our spirit in the semblance of a full-grown man" ... "I am your Lord's emissary, he replied, and have come to give you a holy son."

Although Dawood's translation is poor, nothing is mentioned of a Roman soldier, and the character concerned is presented not as a person but as a "spirit" of the Lord in the "semblance" of a man.

Having said that, other more reliable translations by Muslims are somewhat different. Here is the same verse as given by four others

(ref. Al Qur'an, chapter 19, Maryam, verse 17):

1) A. Yusuf Ali (the translator whom Bushby's bibliography cites):

"She placed a screen from them; then We sent her Our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects."

2) M. M. Pickthal:

"And had chosen seclusion from them. Then We sent unto her Our spirit and it assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man."

3) M. H. Shakir:

"So she took a veil to screen from them; then We sent to her Our spirit, and there appeared to her a well-made man."

4) M. Khalifa:

"While a barrier separated her from them, We sent to her Our spirit. He went to her in the form of a human being."

There is no Roman soldier mentioned in any translation—only "Our angel" and "Our spirit". In subsequent verses, not one indicates that the angelic spirit "forced" his attentions upon Mary. He is depicted in all cases as a "messenger of thy Lord"—wholly reminiscent of the New Testament's angel Gabriel, although not named as such.

Hope this helps.

Best wishes,

Laurence

[Laurence Gardner, KtStGm, KCD, KTStA]